

This is a sad moment for me because I came to Congress believing in enhancing the United States role in a global economy. I represent a State which has prospered mightily from trade. I have enjoyed working with my colleagues the gentleman from California (Mr. Matsui), the gentleman from New York (Mr. Rangel) and with members on the other side of the aisle like the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Crane), the gentleman from California (Mr. Dreier) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. Kolbe) in the development of a bipartisan trade policy.

Last year I was part of an effort, and we came close, there were maybe 210 Members who were willing to vote. But because we were not quite close enough, the Republican Speaker and the administration pulled it back.

Now, in an increasingly partisan atmosphere, the Republican leadership has recklessly endangered our progress and will produce not just fewer Democrats, there will be fewer Republicans that will vote for this bill than we claim to have had last year.

It will undercut our progress on environment and labor. It is a blatant partisan effort that will freeze some of the positions on both sides of the aisle. It toys with Members who really do care about this issue. And by producing today fewer Republicans, fewer Democrats, we are going to send a negative economic signal both at home and abroad.

Most sadly, it shatters the bipartisan trade leadership efforts that Members have worked so hard on on this floor.

I will personally work to restore that bipartisan coalition, work to build bridges, listen to and deal with the legitimate concerns Members have. But this failure that is going to occur today does not underscore the weakness of this President. It talks about the recklessness of the Republican leadership that is not going to be able to produce the same amount of votes that they claimed last year. I am not going to dignify this political act with a yes vote. I will vote present, and I urge others to do similar or vote against it.